

REVISING AND EXTENDING BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF AMERICA

SPEECH OF

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 28, 2004

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Boys and Girls Club of America and to support extending their Charter to meet future goals. As the saying goes, to the world you may be one person. But to one person, you may be their entire world. I think this applies especially to all of the good people involved with the Boys and Girls Club of America.

To me and to millions of children, Boys and Girls Clubs are not just buildings. These clubs are not just places where kids meet other kids. These clubs are the bedrock foundation for a number of young people who face an otherwise rapidly changing, and sometimes unstable, world.

These clubs are a point of stability, an area where young people learn responsibility. These clubs are places where boys and girls learn about teamwork, leadership, and values.

Back in 1860, several women in Hartford, Connecticut believed that boys roaming the street should have a positive alternative. They formed what would become the first Boys Club. In 1906, Boys Clubs started to affiliate and by 1956, the Boys Club of America received a Congressional Charter. Reflecting the times, Girls were added to the official name of the organization and its Charter in 1990.

But Boys and Girls Clubs are more than their history; these clubs are their volunteers, the people who operate these clubs, and the club sponsors. Each individual's contribution is reflected in the success and longevity of this organization. One of the issues I follow closely, support, and promote every chance I get is mentoring. I think this falls directly in line with what the Boys and Girls Club is all about.

Some of my friends might remember a discussion I began several years ago concerning "problems of the soul." My focus was the erosion of moral values in our country and what we might do on a personal level, a community level, and even on a governmental level, to reverse the decline.

Much has occurred in the years since I began talking about problems of the soul. Much of what has happened is positive. Our nation places high value and respect on the family. We are a nation that rushes to the aid of those in need. The people of this country hold in reverence those who sacrifice their work, time with family, even their life for their country.

Despite the best of efforts, long-established vices continue to claw at our society. Plus, our world faces an even deeper evil, one rooted in radical extremism, one that finds its way to our society through terrorism. So clearly, there is still a need to focus on problems of the soul, and a need to find role models willing to give of their time and resources so that our young people have the opportunity to grow, learn, and accept responsibility.

Mentoring is a very worthwhile and much needed cause. Mentors serve as a guiding light, a benchmark, and a valuable asset for the many young people in America who might not otherwise have access to such a role model.

For many young people, mentors set an example of civility and stability. Mentors promote education and community respect. Mentors teach young people that there are benefits to contributing to selfless efforts such as charity drives, neighborhood cleanups, and serving in soup kitchens.

As a mentor, I personally know the satisfaction it brings to offer advice and guidance to a young person. I have known my mentee, Derek Williams for many years. Over that period we have become good friends. Today I am proud to say that he is in college, furthering his education, and building a strong foundation for his future.

There are numerous studies documenting that mentors help young people to augment social skills, enhance emotional well-being, improve cognitive skills, and to plan for the future. It also recognizes that for some children, having a caring adult mentor to turn to for guidance and encouragement can make the crucial difference between success and failure in life.

So it is incumbent on each and every one of us to offer our time and energy and love to children to provide positive role models and influences to young people to give them guidance and hope.

Currently, 17.6 million young people, nearly half the youth population, want or need mentors to help them reach their full potential. Only two-and-a-half million youth are in formal mentoring relationships, leaving 15 million young people still in need of mentors.

Earlier this year I asked Congress to adopt a resolution designating January 2004 as National Mentoring Month. My hope was that this month-long celebration of mentoring would encourage more adults to volunteer their time as mentors for young people and enlist the involvement of nonprofit organizations, schools, businesses, faith communities, and government agencies in the mentoring movement. I think that effort was successful, but we have more to do.

The Boys and Girls Clubs are to be congratulated for working to make a positive difference in our society.

HONORING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF TRI-VALLEY NOW

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 29, 2004

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, Ms. TAUSCHER and I rise today to pay tribute to the 30th Anniversary of the Tri-Valley Chapter of the National Organization for Women (NOW). The Tri-Valley Chapter represents the cities of Pleasanton, Dublin, and Livermore, California.

Attendees at the Third National Conference of the Commission on the Status of Women established the National Organization for Women on June 30, 1966 in Washington, DC. The Commission on the Status of Women reported in 1963, that despite having won the right to vote, women in the United States were still discriminated against in virtually every aspect of life. In 1974, eight years following the Commission's report, Tri-Valley NOW was founded during a national surge in women's activism.

The year 1974 was a time of upheaval and change. President Nixon resigned and Vice

President Gerald Ford was sworn in as President. That year's number one television show, "All in the Family," was a controversial reflection of the social struggles of the time. Title IX, the federal law aimed at providing equal educational opportunities, was in its infancy.

Local women in the Tri-Valley area, such as Dorris Lee, Denise Gordon and Jean Felton could not sit on the sidelines during this stage of change. They took action and, with encouragement from Contra Costa NOW, they planned the Tri-Valley NOW's first meeting in 1974, which featured guest speakers from East Bay NOW.

Since that first meeting of a handful of like-minded feminists in a Livermore, California office, NOW's Tri-Valley chapter has grown to more than 150 members, both women and men.

For 30 years, Tri-Valley NOW has taken action to achieve equality for women. Its members have actively supported women candidates for public office, battled for equal rights and opportunities in the workplace and classroom, written hundreds of letters to editors and legislators, endured the struggle to pass the Equal Rights Amendment and staged countless demonstrations for positive social change.

Tri-Valley NOW looks back on the last 30 years with great pride in their achievements and deep appreciation for their founding mothers. We agree with their statement that "there is much work to be done and we will continue to strive for NOW's goal of equality for all women." NOW has our full support to help achieve this goal.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 5162, THE LAW ENFORCEMENT EXPLOSIVE STORAGE ENHANCEMENT ACT

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 29, 2004

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, sometimes it takes a barely averted catastrophe awaken us to potential dangers. Recently, more than 140 pounds of explosive materials were stolen from a law enforcement storage facility in San Mateo, California. This is enough to destroy a small office building or to blow a hole in the Golden Gate Bridge.

Thankfully, police quickly caught the suspects and recovered all of the explosives. However, we cannot and should not be forced to rely on capturing criminals after a theft to keep our communities safe. After learning what happened I immediately contacted my good friend, and Chairman of the House Government Reform Committee Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations, CHRIS SHAYS, to hold a hearing in San Mateo. Chairman SHAYS recognized right away the seriousness of this problem and graciously agreed to hold a Subcommittee field hearing on August 2, 2004.

During the course of the hearing, we heard from representatives of law enforcement at the federal, state and local levels, as well as members of the explosives industry. Mr. Speaker, I can honestly say that in the 20-plus years I have been a member of the House of Representatives, this hearing was clearly one of the most informative that I had ever been a part of.